2:Shryock H-4, 5 (no date)1931. AF14 Central China AF14

769 or devoured by small boys. In the home a lamp may be lit each evening before the tablets.

769 Ancestral temples are usually found in the country at the family nest,
778 where all the neighbors may be relatives and bear the same surname. There
346 are, however, eight such temples in the city of Anking. They are oblong enclosures, as indeed nearly all Chinese temples are, about one hundred feet long by forty wide, and in the country are usually surrounded by evergreens except in front. The roofs are not curved. They contain three halls directly behind each other, separated by open courts in which trees are planted on either side. First comes the entrance hall, where coffins are often stored, then a room used as a school for the children of the clan or at other times as a meeting place, and lastly the hall of the ancestors. The main doors are not ordinarily open and entrance is made through a side door into the first court. On these main doors are often painted two mythological worthies who act as spiritual doorkeepers. When a man has obtained high rank in the public examinations, a pole something like a Chi Kan is erected before his family temple.

769 Against the back wall of the hall of the ancestors, which is also the rear
346 of the temple, are arranged a series of shelves like rising steps, and on these
778 are the tablets, called Shen Chu, one generation to a shelf, with the founder
212 of the family in the middle of the highest level. The tablets are made of wood and are approximately a foot high and eight inches wide. On them is written the name of the man, his wife and male children, and the characters Chih Wei, meaning his seat or place. These two words are also found on the tablets of gods and great men. Before the tablets is a table or altar, usually of carved wood, on which are five sacrificial vessels, usually of bronze. The central vessel is for incense, the others are pairs, two vases next the incense burner, and two candlesticks on the outside. I have been told the vases are for herbs but I have never seen them there. These five vessels are found on the altar of every Chinese temple, whether Confucian, Buddhist or Taoist.

551 Every Chinese has in addition to his surname, which is in most cases
211

2:Shryock H-4, 5 (no date)1931 AF14 Central China AF14

APPENDIX 9

Ancestral Tablets.

211
769

Without counting the gravestone, there are three kinds of tablets used in commemorating the dead.

1. The temporary soul tablet, called Ling, a gaudy affair of red paper 靈 with the name of the departed in gilt characters, which is used at the funeral and is burnt after one year.

2. The permanent soul tablet, usually called Shen Chu, but sometimes, 神主 in the case of great men, Shen Wei. If is made of two flat pieces of wood 神位 about six inches high and two wide, set on a stand in such a way that they fit together as if they were one piece, the inner overlapping at the top. The outer face contains a line of eleven characters down the center, beginning with the name, and ending with the word Chu, the character whose dotting is 主 described by De Groot. In the lower left hand corner is a name, usually that of the eldest son, the "Continuator", The inner face has the same eleven characters in the center, while on the right is the date of birth, and on the left the date of death. The number of characters must be the same on both sides, and must be odd. This tablet is not placed in the ancestral temple, but

2:Shryock H-4, 5 (no date)1931 AF14 Central China AF14

remains in the home, where it receives regular worship or reverence. Usually it is placed in an elaborately carved wooden case. It is the tablet of one person only.

3. The tablet in the ancestral temple, called Shen Wei. This is a single 神位 flat board a foot high by eight inches broad, also set on a stand, and placed on the same shelf with others belonging to the same generation. It has the names of a number of persons, perhaps as many as ten, but no dates. I have not found any distinction between men and women, the latter appearing in their husband's temple. More detailed records of the family history are kept in books at the temple.

So necessary are these tablets that various devices have been adopted for unusual situations. In Anking there is a public home for destitute old women, and in it is a temple containing the tablets of inmates who have died without any family. Children are often adopted in order that the worship may continue. The custom has even spread into Buddhism, and Buddhist temples may preserve the tablets of their monks. At the Yin Chiang Tzi there is a hall devoted to this purpose. Doolittle (*Social Life of the Chinese*, vol. 2, p. 227) describes "no offspring altars", where the tablets of families which have entirely died out are placed.

Besides the graves and tablets, persons of distinction, both men and women, may be commemorated by halls or temples, by P'ai Lou, or stone arches, and by large stone slabs set on the backs of tortoises. The temples contain P'ai Wei. Confucius therefore has several hundred tablets scattered over the country, which to me seems evidence that only reverence is paid him since there is no doctrine of omniscience or "Real presence" which would enable his spirit to be in so many places at once.